



SENATE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

EXHIBIT NO.

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DATE:

3-22-2011

Associated

Students of The University of Montana

BILL NO.

University Center Suite 105

Missoula, MT 59812

March 22, 2011

Submitted By: Jenifer Gursky  
ASUM Student Legislative Lobbyist  
University Center, Suite 105  
Missoula, MT 59812

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jenifer Gursky and I am a student at the University of Montana, representing the Associated Students of The University of Montana. ASUM currently represents over 15,000 students.

I rise in support of Senate Joint Resolution 16. Representing 15,000 students, nearly 80% of which are in-state students, I stand in support of a study aiming to evaluating the cost of expanding passenger rail service to Montana. Hailing from Sidney to Superior, Chinook to Charlo, University of Montana Students often have to travel the fourth largest state by car. Having friends from Sidney, I can tell you the 10 hour drive during Winter Break is bleak, tiresome, and at times downright dangerous.

The Associated Students of the University of Montana realize the positive outcomes of geographic and monetary accessibility expansion of rail service in Montana would provide for our 15,000 students. Additionally, we recognize the efficiency of rail and the strong economic potential it brings to our state. We would like SJ 16 to get a feasibility study on the table. With no fiscal note attached on this resolution, ASUM strongly supports this resolution as the starting steps to accessible travel for Montana.

Jenifer Gursky  
ASUM Legislative Student Lobbyist  
406-249-9172

**The Associated Students of the University of Montana  
Resolution Regarding Amtrak Service in Montana  
February 3, 2010**

**Senate Bill Number SB 19-09/10**

**Authored by: Patrick Rhea, ASUM Senator and Zach Rogala, ASMSU Senator**

**Sponsored by: Ashleen Williams, ASUM Senator  
And Ray Davis, ASUM Senator**

Whereas, there are limited options of mass transportation available to residents of southern Montana, ASUM is driven to support the development of such options;

Whereas, this service would connect 25 higher education institutions including Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Helena, and Missoula on its route from Chicago to Seattle;

Whereas, this service would lower the student to vehicle ratio on campuses and decrease The University of Montana's (UM) need to invest large capital into parking infrastructure;

Whereas, this service would expand the educational opportunities offered to Montana University

20 System (MUS) students by providing reliable transportation between the various MSU and UM campuses around the state;

Whereas, rail service, on average, is 19% more energy efficient than air travel and 28% more energy efficient than auto travel;

Whereas, train service makes it easier for students to go "carless" saving them \$5,000 - \$8,000 annually;

Whereas, this service would create 269 permanent jobs plus many jobs making equipments and rail improvements;

Therefore, let it be resolved that the Associated Students of The University of Montana supports the reopening of Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha Route;

Let it be further resolved that the ASUM directs the Office of Transportation to continue its lobbying efforts for the reopening of Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha Routes;

Let it be further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to President George Dennison, Senator Max Baucus, Senator John Tester, and Representative Denny Rehberg.

47 Passed by Committee: February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

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50 Passed by ASUM Senate: February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

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55 Andrew Dusek,  
56 Relations and Affairs Chair

55	Andrew Dusek,	EmilyMay,
56	Relations and Affairs Chair	Chair of the Senate

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